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Correspondence.

New York, Feb. 26, 1871.

My Dear Mr. Orvis:

Your paper more nearly meets my ideal of a country newspaper than any I have seen, and if you do not let it fall from its present standard it will be a source of pleasure to you, and of good to your State, even if it be not as profitable to you as the Equinox House.

You can't have too many local items, and if you can interest your subscribers in sending them, all the better for you and for them. Where country papers fail in their neglect of local matters and in a too free use of scholastic and city papers.

It was a rainy day yesterday so I wrote out for you, a short article that I thought might amuse and interest some of your readers; and at the same time serve to show you I have an interest in your success as a journalist and am willing to lend an occasional helping hand. If you publish a newspaper on the same principle that you keep the Equinox House—Liberalism—it must succeed.

Yours Very Truly,

W. S. P.

A WEDDING IN NORWAY.

One lovely July afternoon I drove my little short Norwegian pony down the long hill post-road that runs through the pretty little village of Vossevangen, that clusters at the foot of a good sized lake, embosomed in the mountains of the peninsula formed by the Sogne and the Hardanger Fjords. As we descended the hill, I thought I had never surveyed a more peaceful scene, the placid lake reflecting like a mirror the green hills and the white clouds of the sky. The snow topped mountains of the background looked benignly, over the dozen or so of white walled houses with the village church standing prominently above them, while along the lake side ran the road dotted here and there with farm houses, substantial structures of well hewed logs, strongly built to protect their occupants against the rigors of a nine months winter. At the end of the village not far from the waters edge we found the inn, so neat and clean, and so inviting that although intending only to stop over the approaching Sunday, we instantly determined to rest for a longer time where everything promised so well.

The landlord, a good natured Norwegian welcomed us in English, a language that fell musically upon ears that had become somewhat wearied with an almost unknown tongue. We chatted at once when he found we were Americans, a species of rare birds, at that time far more strange in Norway than Chinese are here, and soon we learned his life's history, an adventure of sea life, with an episode of two years service in a regiment of Norwegian Unionists in the American rebellion and finally succeeding, by his ship to an estate, returns home, marries a pretty wife and settles as the comfortable landlord of the comfortable post-station at Vossevangen. A long carriage ride had sharpened appetites already somewhat tired of salmon, trout, and veal, so I gave a liberal order for anything that could be procured in the shape of a feathered biped. By dint of perseverance a neighbor, the proud owner of three birds, called by courtesy chickens, was persuaded to part with one of his old friends, for old he or she must have been.

I am sure the guests of the Equinox House never dreamed of such a tough customer (unless they have eaten of one before going to Manchester.) Six hours was this "blessed fowl" boiled and then it was fished, but when at last it came to the table no mortal teeth could have mastered it, so we went sorrowfully back to fresh killed veal and trout. Now trout is certainly a delicious dish, especially in Norway, where they grow almost as large as our smaller sea bass; but when one has eaten trout three times a day for several weeks, I must confess they are not looked upon as such a luxury. Whatever became of the feathered biped I don't know, but as a dog seen near the house disappeared and had not been seen again when I left Vossevangen, it is supposed he tried his luck on it and wandered away to die of hopeless indigestion.

We had not been at Vossevangen long before our good friend the landlord informed us that a wedding party was coming down the road. First came ten horsemen at the top of their horses speed tearing along for a few hundred yards, then turning back and riding at an equal break-neck pace to meet the main body. The vanguard of this consisted of about an equal number riding more leisurely, a fiddler among them scraping out some doleful tune. Then on white horses with much be-headed headstalls, and many tinkling bells rode the happy pair. The groom dressed in blue homespun, wide trousers and short jacket profusely trimmed with silver coin buttons, for you must know that the Norwegian peasantry disdains any ornament, even a button if it be not of virgin silver, and to be sure that what they wear is of value they always select coins of the realm for such service.

The bride sat astride her palfrey looking somewhat red in the face, but the fish may have been caused as much by a ten miles ride under a July sun as from maiden bashfulness.

Her hair was new and glossy, her red waistcoat brilliant with white beads and silver chains and dangles, and her head-dress worn for the occasion, in place of the usual white napkin, was of scarlet cloth and black velvet, triangular in form, one point being over the forehead, and trimmed with bead embroidery and gold pendants. Behind her head attendant nymphs, on side-saddles, gaily attired with the whitest of head-dresses and brightest of scarlet waistcoats, jolting with every motion of their horses like colorful butterflies. As the cavalcade wound

through the village street to the church we followed after and entered the church. A scene more picturesque can hardly be imagined. As the gaily dressed party marched up the central aisle, we had time to look about us and note the contrast between somber age and youthful hope, as exemplified in the church and wedding party. The walls are of great thickness, and whitewashed, the windows few, triangular and small. A third part of the interior is divided off for the choir by a thick white wall, and an old wooden grill with roses carved around its frame fills the opening, in which is a rude crucifix supported by two cherubs. The pulpit stands against the wall on one side, and from it leads a gallery to the choir. It is of dark wood, and on each panel, rudely painted, is a figure of some saint. On the wall hang here and there black tablets, inscribed with the record of the virtues of former human greatness. Within the choir hang the portraits of some baron and baroness, whose tablet has met the eyes of the generations of three centuries. Around the sides are pewed stalls, the wainscoting behind being decorated with the painted effigies of saints. The altar was covered with a simple white cloth, and the altar piece depicted the crucifixion. A brass chandelier swung from the center of the ceiling, and beside it pended an angel of colored porcelain bearing in his hands a shell for baptismal use. The ceiling is flat and crossed by rafters, between which are clerestory windows. Around two sides of the walls is a deep wooden gallery, supported by stout pine posts, carved into the semblance of Byzantine columns. In the front of that part overhanging the aisle in a large, square, high-sided pew, with armorial bearings on its carved top, still showing some of its original gift, probably the place where, in bygone years, the lusty couple, whose portraits hang beyond, bowed the knee in another faith.

The pews are sadly worn by frequent use, and no paint has ever spoiled the graining of the virgin wood, and no ornament characterizes them, except a rude fleur de lis at each pew and a roughly carved date, "Anno 1542." The wedding party reached the altar and kneeled before the minister, whose long black gown and Elizabethan ruff agreed more favorably with the somber church than with the gayly dressed party before him. While the marriage service was being read, we had time to glance around at the friends who filled the old pews. The men's dress I have described above, so let them go, who cares for unpretentiousness? But the women are quite another thing, and as there are pretty women in every country, so there are in Norway, where their prettiness is often much enhanced by gay costumes. Each district has its own peculiar costume, and in this it is exceedingly picturesque. On their heads they wear a white napkin wound around to the back of the neck, where the ends are fastened in some mysterious manner, so as to form the top into a triangle, the apex of which is over the forehead. The dress is blue cloth made with a narrow skirt which reaches to the ankles. The waist is of the same material, fashioned somewhat like the upper half of a Quaker's coat, with full topped sleeves that join the body at the shoulder blades. The front is kept together by six silver coin buttons. Above this jacket is worn a sort of waistcoat of scarlet cloth edged with green. Both upper garments are open in front, to display an embroidered shirt, across the front of which is a square of velvet gaily embroidered with beads. Above these is a large silver brooch with numerous concave faces, and around the neck a silver chain, while the collar is held together by silver linked buttons, and the waistband is of silver lace. Some of the dresses were even more richly ornamented. One I noticed, embroidered with gold, above several bands of trimming around the bottom of the skirt, while the waistcoat edge was covered with gold pendants.

The wedding ceremony concluded, and the friendly congratulations ended, the party returned to their homes in the same order as they came. There the table was laden with huge plates of venison and salmon, and the ever present *ful brød* flanked with great silver tankards of beer, awaited them. The merry-making was not very jolly, but exceedingly practical and comfortable, so far as good beer and plenty of tobacco went, and that is all I saw of a wedding in Norway.

F. A. H.

THE SHAKERS.

The Relation Between the United States Civil Government and the United Society of Shakers—A Lecture Delivered in Twelfth Hall, Albany, Nov. 1, 1870, by Elder F. W. Evans.

A Theocratic Republic is an ultimate ideal of prophecy in the scripture records. Every man a landlord, sitting under his grapevine and fig tree, whose fruits are types of the best food for a spiritual people, amongst whom the knowledge of the Lord should prevail over their animal natures as the waters over the bottom of the sea.

In that era, the kingdoms or monarchies of the world, together with its aristocracies and all other forms of human governments, founded by selfishness upon the ignorance of the masses, and sustained by the sword or element of warfare, will become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ people—a universal Theocratic Republic. Under that government, the nations shall learn war no more. Spears will be turned into pruning hooks and swords into ploughshares—universal peace.

Every human government of which war is an integral element will make authority the standard of truth, and will persecute for opinion's sake, war and the inquisition being inseparable concomitants. It may vary its forms, like the dress of modern friends, but the spirit will still be there. "Not by might, nor

by power, but by my Spirit" with the Lord, this work shall be wrought.

The religious power in man can alone conquer all things unto God—to truth. Its tools or agencies, may be many, but that alone can be a sufficient motor.

It was in the history of the Jews that Thomas Paine found the facts that made his "Crisis," (written at the most critical point of the mental revolution which preceded and produced the American Revolution), which turned the hearts of thousands of the people towards the Republican idea of government; thus beginning to break in pieces the monarchies of the old world, by separating the most important foreign possessions of Great Britain (with her Church and State) first from her ecclesiastical and then from her civil control.

As many of the best men and women in America belonged to the established Church, they could not rebel against the Government until they were first separated in the religious faith and feelings from the Church. This was effected by the infidels, of which Paine was the leader.

Paine, Franklin, Jefferson and their skeptical coadjutors who created and sustained the Revolution, and founded a Republican Government, with a constitution, omitting the name of God and Christ as theological terms, were infidels to the orthodoxy of the day as you are infidels to each other—the Protestant to the Catholic, and the Catholic to the Protestant, &c., &c. But they were good men and true, according to the light in which they stood.

They represented on this continent, as did Voltaire, Volney, Mirabeau, Frederick of Prussia, Hume and their compatriots in Europe, the "horns" or powers that grew out of the beast, (whatever that may be), and who hated the "whore of Babylon" stripping her naked, tormenting her with the fire of their infidel truth, and yet eating her flesh; thus incorporating her elements into their Protestant infidel Republicanism, with all its subordinate sub-divisions.

Paine, in his "Crisis" vividly set forth the fact, that the Jews were delivered from the bondage of the Egyptian Monarchs by the agency of Spiritualism, through which, under the direction of the God of Israel (a subordinate or tertiary Divinity) the ten plagues were created, the Red sea divided, the rock smitten to furnish water, the manna rained down upon them from heaven, like flakes of snow, for food; and, under the wilderness diet and other habits, "the promiscuous multitude" were all healed—their God, by those physiological means, "taking all sickness away from the midst of them."

Thus, during forty years, they enjoyed a Theocratic Republic, under which all their natural wants, in food, clothing and lodging were supplied in the most approved democratic manner.

He also set forth, that, under Joshua and the Judges, the Jews were a happy republican people, each family possessing a homestead that could not be alienated from them, even by debt, for more than six years; as, on each recurring septennial sabbatical jubilee, all debts were liquidated by the sounding of the silver trumpets, and all slaves were emancipated; thus antedating, some four thousand years, the great act of Lincoln.

But, when these Jews became infidel to their own religious convictions and began to desire a king, like the nations around them, whose manners and customs they aped (as the planters of the South aped the manners of the European aristocracy, and desired a government that should represent their own idea, with "slavery for the corner stone," Samuel, their theocratic leader, forewarned them of what a king would do to them; that he would destroy liberty and republican equality in land and in its products. But, as they persisted, their God gave them a king in his wrath, and a monarchy in his sore displeasure.

Thus did Paine warn the people from the Church and State Government in the person of George the Third. And Jefferson wrote the Declaration of Rights and of Independence, on the basis that the earth belonged to man in usufruct, and not forever; nor to pass by laws of primogeniture, and by will, from generation to generation.

We have, then, a republic founded by Materialists, with the element of progress inherent in it; and, although not formally or legally recognized, the inspiration of the powers of the world to come has often infused a religious vitality into the councils of the legislatures and the decisions of the Chief Magistrates, both in the several States and in the Presidential chair.

Religious people have not prayed in vain for those in authority in the civil governments of the American Confederation.

The United States Government is the second appearance of the Theocratic Republicism of the Jewish race, as the government of the United Society of Believers, or Shakers, is the second appearance of the Pentecostal Church of the Jewish Christians. Each of these, as yet is in a germinal or undeveloped state, to be fully unfolded by other six coming degrees of progress, signified to John by seven thunders that uttered their voices, these being seven consecutive testimonies of truth against seven successive openings of false, or evil, represented by seven seals that were successively opened during the twelve hundred and sixty years of the reign of the beast, which both Cummings and Shimeal place (as has done the Shaker writers before them) in 1793, when the Church of Christ's Second Appearing was founded, thus being contemporary with the American Revolution.

These Two Orders—a civil and a spiritual—complement each other; and they will progress in parallel lines of ascension until they have formed, on this earth, a body and a soul—a dual government—in the first, a physical heaven for the body,

where all its rights will be secured, its wants supplied, and its uses in Divine order; from which diseases will be excluded, and in which war will be unknown. In the second, a heaven for the souls that have obtained the victory over death and the grave.

The same spirits that inspired the leaders of the Jewish people with Millennial ideas, such as were practically carried out in the Wilderness for forty years, have always existed, still exist. They often used the Jews as mediums, as in the case of Cyrus, who sent the Jews back from Babylon, to rebuild the second temple, a type of the Gentile Pentecostal Church or Shaker Church,—as the first temple was the type of the Jewish Pentecostal Church which was built when Israel was in great power and glory as a nation among nations; while the second temple was built by Jews and Gentiles, under the protection of the civil government of Babylon; just as the Shakers are building the temple of God, with its celestial, non-resistance, its yea and nay, simplicity of speech and of dress, its community of property, and temperance, which will illuminate in a fruit and vegetable diet, and in Divine Spiritualism, increasing unto the perfect day, when God shall be all, and in every thing.

Will you go back with me to the early days of Christianity, predicated that the physiological truths of Moses and the Prophets were the basic foundations of Christianity, and that none but a good Jew could become a Christian, a member of the Jewish Pentecostal Church; as Jesus did not preach his whole Gospel except to the "lost sheep of the house of Israel." A diluted Gospel, likened to milk, was preached by Jesus and Paul to Pagan converts—Romans, Corinthians, Ephesians, Galatians, &c., all down to the year 1770, when Ann Lee began to take off the face of the covering that was over all people, and the veil that was spread before the face of all nations of Gentile Christians, who suppose that the whole truth of Christ's Gospel was contained in the creeds and dogmas of those several sects and churches.

And here let me say that we must all drink of the cup of suffering that Jesus drank of, and be baptized with the baptism that Jesus was baptized with, or not be Christian that can gather with him in the spirit world. There is a subtle Christ sphere or heaven, intervening between the inhabitants of all material worlds, and Deity; and from thence go Christ spirits to all parts of creation, as they came to Jesus and Ann Lee on this earth, and to as many as have received them who have thus become or are becoming sons and daughters of God, as were Jesus and Ann.

If we thus go back to the early ages of Gentile Christianity we may trace the growth from the germ up to the Shaker Church, through all the variations, the changes and exhibitions of the history of Christianity, as foreseen and graphically described in the Apocalypse. When the key to this book is once attained, the whole becomes simple history, but written before the events occurred.

When Christianity passed over to the Pagan population of Rome and its empire, we have records of germinal Christianity which the Spirit, through John, predicted would take 1,200 years to develop. During that period the holy city or Pentecostal Church would be trodden down by these Pagan or Gentile Christians. The "woman" or church fled into the wilderness, the two witnesses prophesied in sackcloth, and a complex system, denominated "the beast," reigned for the same period of time. (See Cummings and Shimeal.) At the end of that period Christ was again manifested in a Church.

We have first the Hermit Age, during which, Draper states, that at one time there were in Egypt 76,000 males and 27,000 females who lived alone, each in his and her cave or hut or cell. These were mortifying the appetites and propping their bodies and souls as the light dawned upon them.

First—They began by abstinence from animal food, and lived upon coarse bread, roots and herbs, often fasting entirely, drinking only water.

Second—They practiced silence to mortify idle, useless, or wicked talk, speaking but very seldom.

Third—They disciplined themselves in peace, learning to overcome evil with good.

Fourth—They forsook all property not absolutely needed to support life.

Fifth—They forsook all generative relations.

Sixth—They swore not at all.

Seventh—They not only lived celibates, but they waged a war of extermination against all thoughts and imaginations arising from, or tending towards the life principle; thus they "hated their own life." St. Jerome said that "while marriage fills the earth, it is virginity that peoples heaven."

At first these hermits abjured labor and spent their time in incessant prayer and other devotional exercises.

At Jerusalem, an asylum for the insane hermits was established, the insanity being largely due to a want of work. This was soon remedied, and some simple employment was found, such as making mats, &c.

Around some of the most rational and holy of those hermits, disciples built their cells, and thus the first monasteries were founded—St. Jerome, St. Anthony, St. Hilarion (who is said to be the first) founded monasteries by a gradual growth.

"From Egypt and Syria monasteries spread like an epidemic into Europe."

Of the extent of this system, we may form some idea from the claim of St. Benedict to twenty-four popes, two hundred cardinals, seven thousand archbishops, fifteen thousand bishops, fifteen thousand abbots, four thousand monks, thirty-four thousand monasteries, twenty emperors, ten empresses, forty-nine kings, fifty queens, and one hundred princesses.

These monasteries were the seats of learning, the hospitals for the sick, the almshouse for the poor, neutral ground for warriors, a home for young men and women who wished to devote themselves to a religious life in this world, as a preparation for the next. Also, they subserved the purpose of hotels for travelers.

In the Reformation, these monasteries and nunneries—"stars"—under the Mortmain act of Henry the Eighth, fell to earth as a fig tree sheds its untimely fig, humbly not being quite ready for a celestial order, as a permanent institution.

The end had come. The Jews, as a people, we have seen, lived in two orders—the natural and spiritual—a perfect Theocratic Republic; and they prospered as a nation, the nearer they approximated toward it; and in diverging from it, they suffered unto national subjugation and total dispersion.

The administration of Moses and of Solomon exhibits two phases of prosperity—the Divine and human, and the human and Divine: "The song of Moses, the servant of God."

The Pagans, or Gentiles, who embraced the Christian profession under Constantine, combined these two orders, and mixed them together—Church and State.

And today some very good persons want to introduce the God and Christ of Christianity into American Civil Government. I say, do not do it, or you will soon have an Inquisition.

But let the Civil Government continue to progress parallel with the Shaker Order, towards the Millennial State. It has already made free the public lands established a homestead law, abolished imprisonment for debt, given woman many of her rights of property and person, and will soon let her help make the laws, because she obeys them, or suffers the penalty. And let all who will work have land to raise food upon. And now that slavery is abolished (not once in seven years, but) permanently, let all debts be paid (not once in a great while, by a Bankrupt law, but) for ever, leaving it to the honesty or ability of the debtor to pay or not pay.

The American Government is right as it is. Let her legislators be (not bribed, but) inspired, and let the Civil officers be fervently prayed for, that they may "love mercy, do justly, walk humbly," and always protect the growing Shaker Church of Christ as its own vitalizing element.

SPANISH FUNERAL CUSTOMS.

BY JOHN HAY.

In all well-to-do families the house of death is deserted immediately after the funeral. The stricken ones retire to some other habitation, and there pass eight days in strict and inviolable seclusion. On the ninth day the great masses for the repose of the soul of the departed are said in the parish church, and all the friends of the family are expected to be present. These masses are the most important and expensive incident of the funeral. They cost from two hundred to one thousand dollars, according to the strength and fervor of the orisons employed. They are repeated several years on the anniversary of the decease, and afford a most sure and most flourishing revenue to the church.

They are founded upon those feelings inseparable from every human heart, vanity and affection. Our dead friends must be as well prayed for as those of others, and who knows but that they may be in deadly need of prayers! To